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Title : Need to safeguard the interest of pensioners in the country.

SHRI KODIKKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for allowing me to raise a matter of urgent public importance in this House. The Employees Provident Fund scheme is in a very pathetic condition for the last few years and the recipients also are suffering a lot because of its faulty implementation. Nowadays the living cost and medical expenses have been hiked with the speed of a rocket. The pension recipients must get the minimum pension of Rs. 3,000 and the members of private and guild workers have to get the consideration. Out of 35 lakh pensioners 14 lakh pensioners are getting a pension below Rs.500 and it is also a disgrace to mention that some of the pensioners are getting only Rs. 12/- as monthly pension. In their service period these people contributed towards this scheme for several years and at the end of their service career they are getting a very meagre amount as pension. If they deposited this amount in a bank as a savings account or had invested in any other scheme of deposit, then the interest may have been higher than the EPF.

In Cashew sector most of the workers are women and all of them are living below poverty line. After their retirement they are fully dependent on this nominal pension. Earlier they were getting the death fund and had the commutation facility. But with the implementation of the new scheme the death fund and commutation have been withdrawn. It should be reinstated.

In the above circumstances, I urge upon the Government of India to take necessary steps to increase the pension amount to at least Rs. 3000 and the fund should be accumulated from different sources of schemes implemented by the Government of India at the earliest to safeguard the interests of the poor pensioners without delay.